



DIRECT CONNECTION

*Current news from the Missouri Division of
Developmental Disabilities to keep you informed*

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Employment Services Help Individuals with Autism Gain Jobs

STACY'S STORY

Stacy, who was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in middle school, struggled to fit in socially for as long as she can remember, and this difficulty translated negatively to her professional life. Stacy obtained three jobs but was unable to retain her positions primarily due to problems interacting with coworkers, supervisors, and customers.

According to Dr. Scott Standifer of the Disability and Policy Studies at the University of Missouri, the employment rate for people with disabilities is very low and is even lower for people with autism. Stacy began receiving services from Alternative Opportunities (AO), an agency that is contracted by the Missouri Department of Mental Health to provide employment services for individuals with ASD using Southwest Missouri Autism Project funding. Stacy was able to develop her social and interpersonal skills and find a job while participating in AO's programs, and she has successfully maintained that job for more than 1 ½ years.

Additionally, Stacy found success in a field that involves work that some people believe is beyond the capabilities of an individual with ASD. For more than 20 months, Stacy has been providing direct customer service and sales to the public. This is no small feat for someone with ASD, a disorder which often causes significant barriers with social interactions and communication.

While in AO's Prevocational Program, Stacy completed a curriculum that was customized to meet her specific needs. Stacy also participated in mock interviews, role playing, customer service exercises, and other activities to develop her vocational and social skills.

Once Stacy completed her prevocational training, she began job placement and retention services. Six weeks later, Stacy began work at Crossmark, a company which markets and sells food products to the public in retail settings. After working successfully on her job for 90 days, Stacy received more support through AO's Intensive Follow Along Program which provides one-on-one support for Stacy both on and off the job. Stacy was able to meet with her Job Developer almost daily for the first several weeks of her employment to provide feedback regarding her job.

Stacy's success is also a large return on investment for the entities funding her services. Stacy is currently earning \$10.50 per hour, is working approximately 20 hours per week, and has earned almost \$20,000 since becoming employed. In addition to fostering esteem and independence, for each of those dollars, Stacy has contributed to social security and paid federal and state taxes.

Stacy said, "I really like my job and I'm learning to make friends in a positive way. I'm learning how to have normal conversations and not try to make stories up to fit in."

To share the success of other individuals and families, visit www.dmh.mo.gov/dd/spotlight

DD System Redesign Workgroup

Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Redesign Workgroup have been posted on the DD website. The link to the Frequently Asked questions is <http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/DDSystemWorkgroup.htm>.

Best Practice in Self-Determination'

A key element to self-determination is for individuals to have a circle of support made of family, friends, and community members to support them.

New Publication

Friends: Connecting People with Disabilities and Community Members (2013)

By A. Amado



This new manual provides concrete, "how-to" strategies for supporting relationships between people with disabilities and other community members. It describes why such friendships are important to people with disabilities and why it is important to promote community belonging and membership. The manual includes specific activities to guide users in creating a plan for connecting people. It is designed for agency staff, but can be used by parents, support coordinators, teachers, people with disabilities, and others to support community relationships. Additional Activity Worksheets are available in a separate document. Published by the Institute's Research and Training Center on Community Living.

Cost: Free. Available on the Web

at http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/Friends_Connecting_people_with_disabilities_and_community_members.pdf

Additional activity worksheets available at http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/Friends_Activity_worksheets.pdf

Oral Health Update

Dental Team Training

With assistance from the Division and Adair County DD Board, a two day training for dental teams took place in Kirksville December 5 and 6. The training was funded by the Missouri Oral Health Network and was hosted by the Northeast Missouri Health Council. Dr. Robert Rada, an Illinois dentist specializing in treatment for people with developmental disabilities conducted the training which included a lecture and discussion on day one and a hands-on dental clinic on day two. Seven dentists, 2 hygienists, 11 dental assistants and 9 Health Council staff provided dental care valued at nearly \$6500 to 22 people with developmental disabilities. Services included exams, basic and deep cleaning, fillings, X-rays, extractions, and sealants. Only one scheduled patient was unable to keep his appointment resulting in the best rate of kept appointments since the dental team training began in 2009. Other locations where this training has taken place are Kansas City (twice), Springfield, Sikeston, and St. Louis.

Dental Services through Partnership for Hope

Over \$58,000 in dental care has been provided to 41 adults through the Partnership for Hope waiver since October of 2010. Waiver participants receiving dental care through Partnership for Hope reside in Adair, Boone, Camden, Clark, Clay, Jackson, Jefferson, Marion, and St. Charles counties and the City of St. Louis.

Missouri Oral Health Coalition

The Missouri Oral Health Coalition board has issued a policy statement advocating the re-instatement of the adult dental benefit to the MO HealthNet state plan. The policy statement is posted on the Coalition website at: <http://www.oralhealthmissouri.org/mx/hm.asp?id=home>

Assistive Technology Update

Assistive technology was new to Missouri DD waivers in 2011, starting with the Comprehensive and Support waivers, and is now in all five waivers. Following is an update on utilization since July, 2011. Assistive technology has been used in a wide variety of ways to enable people to be more independent. Examples include video monitoring, door alarms, and bed sensors that reduce the need for on-site overnight support, medication dispensing devices, GPS tracking devices and hearing aids for adults. For more information about how assistive technology may be provided through the waivers please refer to Guideline 25.

Facility Name	Provider Site	Consumers
Central Missouri Regional Office	Boone County Family Resources	32
Central Missouri Regional Office	Callaway Co Special Services (Adult Enrichment)	1
Central Missouri Regional Office	Community Alternatives Of Missouri, Inc	1
Central Missouri Regional Office	Moniteau County SB40 Board	1
Hannibal Regional Office	Community Alternatives Of Missouri, Inc	1
Joplin Regional Office	Area Hearing And Speech Clinic, Inc	1
Kansas City Regional Office	Community Alternatives Of Missouri, Inc	1
Kirksville Regional Office	Community Alternatives Of Missouri, Inc	1
Kirksville Regional Office	Night Owl Support Systems	4
Rolla Regional Office	Audiology & Hearing Services	3
Sikeston Regional Office	Community Alternatives Of Missouri, Inc	1
St Louis Regional Office	Adapt Ability	4

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Caregiver training

We would like to take this opportunity to remind providers and families about the oral health training video for caregivers developed by the division in partnership with the Elks Mobile Dental program in 2010. The program was funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health and piloted by the Arc of the Ozarks and Emmaus Homes. The training video is posted at <mms://wmvstream.dese.mo.gov/oralhygiene>. The program evaluation showed measurable improvement in oral health status of participants whose caregivers were trained. Participants also showed measurable improvements in level of patient cooperation while receiving dental care. The evaluation is posted on the division's website at <http://dmh.mo.gov/docs/dd/OralHealth.pdf>

Upcoming Events

March 12, 2014- MOAAIDD Annual Conference Featuring Al Condeluci; "Understanding Community and Social Capital"; Columbia, Missouri www.moaaidd.org

March 13, 2014- MOAAIDD Annual Conference Featuring Al Condeluci; "Building Community from the Inside Out"; St. Charles, Missouri: www.moaaidd.org

June 16 & 17, 2014- DMH-DD 'The Future is Now' Bi Annual Conference; Holiday Inn Executive Center, Columbia Missouri